Theol. Seminary, Newton Centre Nov. 24-41

To the Society of Inquiry in the Princeton Theological Seminary.

Dear Brethren,

Your truly fraternal letter from the hand of your Asst. Cor. Sec. Jesse Edwards was recd. several months since. It shd. have recd. a more speedy reply. Our apology for this protracted delay is that your vacation commenced soon after your communication was recd. & our vacation immediately followed. Thus we have been debarred the privilege of sooner reciprocating your Christian courtesy.

We warmly second those expressions of Christian union which you speak of as binding us together. It is true there are differences of opinions between us; but they are of such a kind as to make us none the less brothers in Christ & fellow laborers in the same glorious work. The salvation of souls through the atonement of our crucified Redeemer is the great object at which we all aim; & we all bear the high office of ambassadors from God to a lost & ruined world. Brethren, be persuaded, when in after years we meet any of your number in the wide field of our Master laboring for the reconciliation of rebellious men to their offended Lord, it will be a sweet pleasure to give you a Brother's welcome & bid you a Brother's "God speed."

We cordially second those remarks upon the greatness of the work in which we hope soon to be engaged. Truly when

we let down & try to reflect upon it in all its reality + of the vastness, the solemnity of the work & our unfitness for it, the view is overwhelming. To win immortal souls to Christ- the responsibility might crush an angel to the earth. Would not those holy beings who sung "Glory to God in the highest. On earth peace- Goode will to men" & who, we are told, "rejoice over one sinner that repenteth"- would not angels rejoice to follow the Lord they adored to this wicked world & here to toil & suffer & die even as he died for the rescue of lost man? But they are denied the precious privilege. To us the honor & the privilege is granted of bearing forth to the world the glad tidings of salvation. How rich also seems the privilege when viewed in this aspect. We esteem it the greatest privilege if, when a friend has greatly benefited us, he gives to us an opportunity to return in some measure his favor. So our blessed Savior, in addition to the blessing of salvation grants us the happiness of showing our gratitude by striving to bring others, to love & to serve him.

You speak also of the importance of present duty. How often it seems to us a dark & mysterious Providence when death is permitted to lay his hand upon one who is almost prepared to enter his ministerial labors. We have stood perhaps by the coffin of a young Christian brother of noble intellect & devoted piety, who a few days before was eagerly panting for his work & who bid fair to be abundantly useful to the Church. And as we turned our thoughts back & looked at the years which he had spent in preparatory study & thought then how near was the day of his active labor- we have wondered why he should have been thus cut down; & we have felt perhaps that he had labored for nought, & wasted his strength. Many a one has with deep sorrow asked, "Why was it that the pious & gifted James Brainard Taylor was permitted to waste so many years in useless study, & was called to give up his

account just as he was leaving the Theol. Seminary?" But is there not this consideration to console us. If in College Taylor was the means of the conversion of one of his college mates, or if in the Theol. Seminary he was instrumental in deepening the tone of piety among his brethren, he may have left behind him an influence far greater than he could have exerted by a long life of active ministerial labor. How important viewed in this light appears present duty.

But you ask information with regard to our religious Societies. The Western Association of which you speak, is not at present in existence. We have a Society called the "Society of Missionary Inquiry" which embraces all the Students of the Institution. This Society holds its meetings on the third Wednesday of each month; at which two essays upon subjects connected with the missionary enterprise are read before the Society. There is another Society called the "Missionary Association" of which about 8 or 10 of our number are members. This Association meets on the third Monday of every month. An essay is read at each meeting upon some practical question of duty & the subject of the essay is made the theme of social conversation. The Constitution requires that each member of the Association take into serious & prayerful consideration the question whether it be his duty to become a missionary. In years past many missionaries have gone out from this Association who are now toiling on many a heathen shore; & we hope that some of our little company will spend their days in the same noble but arduous work. We have to lament however that the Missionary Spirit is not sufficiently active among us. We ask your prayers, Brethren, that we may grow in grace & in devotion to our Master's cause. The vast globe with its 800,000,000 of souls is the

field before us. Truly, the harvest is great & the laborers are few. May the Lord send forth from our united Seminaries many faithful & devoted Laborers, who shall be instrumental in the conversions of thousands.

In behalf of the Society of Missionary Inquiry,
Geo. W. Samson { One of the Committee of Correspondence

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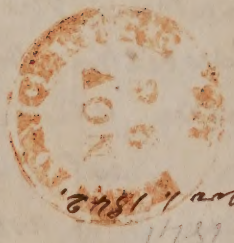
To/ The Society of Inquiry,
Theological Seminary,
Princeton,
N. J.



P.S. We shall ever be happy to hear from you by letter & to meet your members at our anniversaries; which are held on Tuesday before the third Wednesday in August. G. W. S.